

Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum
Board of Directors
Minutes

December 19, 2002
3:00 p.m.

Monday Afternoon Club
Willows, Ca.

Chair Jane Dolan called the meeting of the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum to order at 3:05 p.m. at the above location. It was determined there was a quorum of (11) voting members present.

<u>County</u>	<u>Public Interest</u>	<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Butte	Jane Dolan	Shirley Lewis	
Colusa	(David Womble)	Ben Carter	
Glenn	(Denny Bungarz)	Don Anderson	
Shasta	Glenn Hawes	(Dan Gover)	
Sutter	(Dan Silva)	Russell Young	
Tehama	Bill Borrer	Brendon Flynn	
Yolo	Lynnel Pollock	Marc Faye	
Resources Agency			Mel Dodgin
Cal DWR		(Dwight Russell)	Stacy Cepello
Cal DFG			Diana Jacobs
State Reclamation Board			Pete Rabbon
USF&WS			(Marie Sullivan)
USCOE			Mark Charlton

1. **Unscheduled Matters**: John Merz, Sacramento River Preservation Trust (SRPT), expressed concerns about land use changes being discussed in several counties; because of the ramifications, he felt this should be discussed by the SRCA Forum. It appears some county supervisors are not aware of this (the Forum) body, he suggested that in an effort to pull the counties together, the public interest representatives provide more information to the respective county boards concerning the role of the SRCA Forum. Tom Evans noted Colusa County has had a policy in place that requires rezoning when converting land to habitat but that it had not been implemented until recently. The Butte County Board of Supervisors has referred the issue to their planning commission to determine what their approach will be to the issue. The Family Water Alliance (FWA) is encouraging counties to develop a uniform policy to safeguard agricultural land. Bill Borrer informed the group that Tehama County has been notified that the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is not going to come forward with PILT monies this year because the legislature did not appropriate funds. He also encouraged the counties to respond to a US Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) proposed designation of critical habitat for vernal pool crustaceans and plants in California and southern Oregon. The proposal could designate 200,000 privately held acres in Tehama County as critical habitat; the deadline for comments is Monday, December 23rd. The CALFED Science Conference will be held

January 14th, 15th, and 16th at the Sacramento Convention Center. The conference will offer 186 different topics over the three days; cost for the conference is \$100.00.

2. **Consent Calendar**- Lynnel Pollock moved, seconded by Marc Faye, to adopt the September 26th, 2002 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. **Agency Reports** - Diana Jacobs introduced Gary Hobgood who is working with the Sacramento River Bank Protection Project (SRBPP) Interagency Work Group. The group was formed out of the biological opinion issued by the USFWS & National Marine Fisheries Service on the Corps of Engineers (COE) proposed projects. Initial tasks will include investigations into rock placement and techniques for quantifying impacts and mitigative measures for SRBPP actions. Diana also provided handouts on the latest round of CALFED directed action proposals, those recommended for funding, and those re-submitted November 1. The M&T Chico Ranch was recommended for partial funding in the amount of \$636,000. The funding will provide for another round of gravel removal if needed and further development of the long-term planning study. RD108's proposal, *Consolidated Pumping Facility and Fish Screen* and The Nature Conservancy proposal, *Restoration of the Confluence Area of the Sacramento River, Big Chico and Mud Creeks*, were also approved. The next round of proposals is being reviewed now and they will accommodate the SRCAF schedule to allow for comments. In response to a question it was noted that all comments on previous proposals were submitted to Dan Ray and were forwarded to the selection panel for their review. The 30-day comment period will begin on the latest round as soon as they are posted.

Pete Rabbon, The Reclamation Board, gave an update on the erosion at the J-Levee. Public Law 84-99 emergency operations at Hamilton City would not take effect until the river level rose to 143 with predictions that it would continue to rise. The PL84-99 authority does not allow assistance to protect private land or individual private property; assistance can be only be provided when there is an imminent threat to life or public property from flooding. Mark Charlton, Corps of Engineers (COE), stated they cannot respond under PL84-99 unless there is (1) "imminent danger of failure" and (2) the state indicates they have exhausted all of their resources. Mark noted they do try to be pre-emptive; they do investigate prior to "imminent danger" occurrence. The Comprehensive Study Interim Report Comprehensive Study is out and will be on the December 20th Reclamation Board agenda. Over 5,000 postcards were mailed out indicating that the final report would be available December 10th on the website, www.compstudy.org.

Glenn County was recognized for its efforts in constructing the back-up levee to the upper end of the J Levee. The rainy weather has slowed the work and it is not completed as yet.

Hamilton City -- A workgroup meeting was held on December 16th, the Feasibility Study is moving forward. The locals were encouraged to continue to stay aggressively involved in the process.

Statewide Floodplain Task Force - Made up of 40+ members, the Task Force was charged with looking at statewide floodplain policy and, through a consensus process, making

recommendations. Copies will be made available to the SRCAF staff for distribution. Information in the report will be useful to counties and cities. Recommendations from the report are available on the following website, fpmtaskforce.water.ca.gov. Tim Ramirez thanked Russell Young, SRCAF Board member and member of the Floodplain Task Force, for all of his efforts.

Greg Werner, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), updated the Board on the public access study being conducted by EDAW, the consultant contracted by TNC through CALFED funding. Two public workshops have been held, interviews have been conducted with a wide variety of stakeholders, and an inventory map of existing facilities has been developed. The study focuses on the future needs and opportunities, management coordination, and law enforcement issues. The map will be on the website currently being developed by Chico State and should be available in April or May of 2003. There was some discussion on trespass issues and fears that the availability of the mapping may worsen the problems.

5. Board Committee Reports -

- Executive Committee – the Chair reported on the approval of a proposal submitted by the SRCA Forum to the Resources Law Group requesting funding to accomplish: (1) Staff training to improve the effectiveness and productivity. (2) Facilitation of a planning conference for the Board members and (3) Development of an organizational work plan for the SRCA Forum. The planning conference will probably take place in March; the Chair asked for suggestions for locations for the conference. The Executive Committee will work with the SRCAF staff in selection of the consultant.
The Family Water Alliance has requested an amendment to the Handbook; the process requires that the request go to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review and recommendation to the Board at the next Board meeting, January 16th.
- Landowner Assurances Committee (LAC) - Ben updated the group on the presentation given at the November and December meetings on Incidental Take Authorization and how it relates to the Good Neighbor Policy, specifically Policy action #3. Discussion will continue on this issue and Chris Beale and Renee Hawkins have agreed to develop a matrix showing side-by-side comparisons of the options at the January 8th meeting. The presentation will go to the Board but it is still in the process of being developed. Tom Evans asked that the agencies be proactive in developing an approach that requires the least amount of involvement on the part of the landowners.
- TAC – Stacy reported that the TAC also heard the presentation on Incidental Take Authorization for informational purposes. Discussion at the TAC suggested that a matrix that looked at the pros and cons of each of the available options would be very helpful, after first determining what the SRCA Forum is trying to accomplish. It was noted that a key piece of this is regulatory streamlining which will be part of the next phase of the discussion.
- PILT/Economic Committee – Responses have been sent to TNC concerning the draft socio-economic report recently conducted by Jones and Stokes. John Merz suggested there needed to be discussion at the Board level on the findings in the study. It was noted that the Chair of the PILT/Econ Committee has asked the members of the Committee to review the study and send comments to him so that he can present those comments to the Board. There was also comment that the PILT/Econ Committee should

have access to all of the comments that were received by TNC. There was further discussion on process connected to the socio-economic report, what to do next with this report as well as future reports. The Committee will meet prior to the next Board meeting and report back to the Board.

- Outreach Committee – Copies of the new brochure were presented to the Board. There was some discussion on the best way to distribute them to stakeholders. Copies will be sent to the boards of supervisors in each of the involved counties.

6. **Manager's Report** – Due to time constraints, the Manager briefly commented on the CALFED Working Landscapes Committee that is working on many issues similar to those the SRCAF is addressing, i.e., minimizing impacts to agricultural lands and regulatory streamlining. A workgroup meeting was held December 16th at the Hamilton City Fire Hall to discuss the construction of the “backup” to the upper end of the J Levee and the progress of the Feasibility Study. A handout of the Manager’s report was available to the group and was also included in the Board packets.

Denny Bungarz, Co-Chair of the Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee (BDPAC), announced an upcoming 2-day meeting in early spring; the first day would involve a workshop or tour, possibly of Hamilton City, and the second day would be the formal BDPAC meeting.

7. **Future Meeting Dates** - The Board will continue to meet on the third Thursday of each month. The next meeting was set for January 16th, 3:00 p.m., at the Monday Afternoon Club in Willows.